

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Sean A. Foley)

## Can you hear me now?

Sgt. 1st Class Derek Heavny, a platoon sergeant with Troop A, 1st Squadron, 40 Cavalry Regiment, calls in his position during a cordon and search mission in Hawr Rajab, a suburb of Baghdad, Iraq. The troop conducted the mission after receiving a tip that makers of roadside bombs live in the area.

# NPTT hands over daily duties to Iraqis

By Spc. L.B. Edgar,  
7th MPAD

CAMP RUSTAMIYAH, Iraq - Imagine morning commutes replete with a cup of coffee followed by a drive through the roadside-bomb littered streets of Baghdad, then a long day of training Iraqi National Policemen to secure their neighborhoods. The day's work ends with an equally hazardous return trip.

This is the basic job description of National Police Transition Team (NPTT)

members.

The NPTT works daily to assist the Iraqi NPs who are standing up their units and building up their resources in order to shore up the city of Baghdad's security, Maj. Dana Williams, brigade executive officer, 4th Brigade, 1st National Division Police Transition Team.

"The ultimate goal is to get them to stand on their own two feet so we don't have to come back," the native of Hayward, Calif., said.

In order to accomplish the mission, the

NPTT relies on multi-skilled team members, said Capt. Cary Rux, advisor, 4th Brigade, 1st National Police Div. Transition Team.

Each team member wears at least three "hats" on a daily basis: team member, vehicle crew member and advisor to the Iraqi NPs, the native of Spokane, Wash., said.

"You have to switch hats to get the job done," Rux explained. "You have to do the

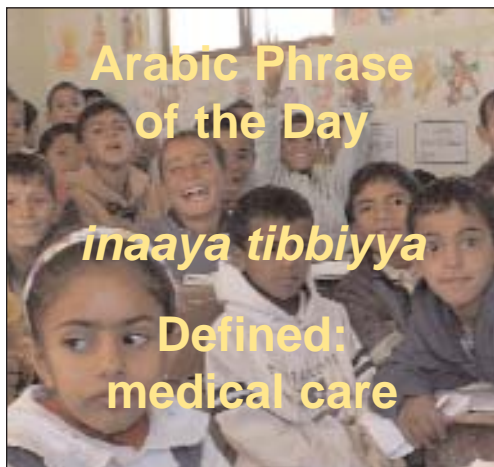




(Photo by Sgt. Michael Garrett 7th MPAD)

## "Brother, brother, brother, OH YEAH!"

World Wrestling Entertainment champion John Cena, delivers his finishing maneuver to his opponent, Edge, during the WWE Tribute to the Troops Christmas Special, filmed Dec. 8 at Camp Liberty. The show was the fourth consecutive holiday special filmed with deployed troops. The episode will air Christmas night.



## Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 70  
Low: 33

Tomorrow

High: 52  
Low: 33

Sunday

High: 65  
Low: 41

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# Iraqi NPs to lead the way in upcoming missions

## NPTT

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first two before you can do the last."

The current NPTT for 4th Bde, 1st NP Div. deployed from Fort Riley, but received a 45-day crash course of instruction at Fort Hood prior to deployment, Rux said.

Three years after its inception, the NPTTs are working as

hard as ever toward getting the NPs ready to assume responsibility. Yet, the team itself, which is responsible for the NPs transition, is undergoing a change of its own. A company of Soldiers is taking over the team's daily duties, Rux said.

"Normally the transition teams only have 30 or 40 people total. With our 137 Soldiers, we bring a lot more ability to train these guys and make sure they're ready to go

out and assume missions and control of the sectors out there," said Capt. Matthew Stuckey, company commander, Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div., attached to 2nd BCT, 2nd Infantry Div.

This is the first time an entire company will be partnered with a whole Iraqi NP brigade to provide training as well as conduct operations, Stuckey said.

"It's quite an honor for us to be chosen as the first company to be going in and doing this mission. I've got a lot of confidence in my guys. They've trained well. They're really a great group of Soldiers and NCOs. I know they're ready to do this. It really makes us proud to be doing this mission," Stuckey said.

According to Rux, Iraqi NPs will be leading the way on missions in the coming year.

"Rather than doing them (missions) with my platoons and company missions with small attachments of Iraqi

Army or Iraqi National Police, it will be Iraqi National Police with a small squad of my Soldiers attached to them or a section of a platoon attached to them to make sure they are successful in their missions," Stuckey, who resides in Temple, Texas, said.

Over the next few weeks the company will assess the brigade's capabilities in order to tailor training to meet its needs and assure mission success for the Iraqi National Police, Stuckey said.

"My Soldiers will be working with the individual Soldiers at a much lower level of the National Police to see what their actual ability level is and what they can actually accomplish at that level," Stuckey explained.

Mission success is the same for Co. A as well as 4th Bde., 1st NP Div.

"Success is that the Iraqis are able to accomplish their missions. They're able to provide security in the sector they're responsible for and that is success for us."



(Photo by Spc. L.B. Edgar, 7th MPAD)

**An Iraqi National Police colonel of the 4th Brigade, 1st NP Division, hangs a map at the division headquarters.**



(Photo by Warrant Officer Don Ellibee, 4th BCT (ABN), 25th Inf. Div. Public Affairs)

## On the lookout

**Paratroopers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division use binoculars to scan an area near Jurf as Sakhr for insurgent activity.**



**Trigger Pull:**

# Playoffs begin ... in 'Fantasyland'

**By Master Sgt. Dave Larsen  
Resident Sports Buff**

The Bowl Championship Series is set with the Ohio State Buckeyes facing now-number two Florida for all the marbles. Before I get to the pro game, I must say a few words about this historic match-up.

The computer rankings had the Gators tied with the Michigan Wolverines when the final regular season game was played. That meant that the voters - NCAA coaches and sports writers - picked the title game contestants this year.

Boy, did they get it wrong.

Most of the voters left Michigan at number two in the nation, after they played the best game of the year losing to Ohio State in Columbus by only a field goal.

Michigan slips to number three in the rankings, not because of anything they did, but what their conference doesn't do: have an extra game for more revenues.

Conference tournaments in college basketball and conference championship games in football aren't about competition at all. They're all about the money for the conference.

The Big Ten and the Pac Ten haven't stooped to the money grubbing tactic, and



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Mary Rose 7th MPAD)

## **Master Sgt. Dave Larsen**

this year the Wolverines get penalized for it.

With the match-up set, I'm curious what kind of line the bookies in 'Vegas' are putting on this one. Ohio State HAS to be double-digit favorites. My prediction: Ohio State 35, Florida 14. It'll be over by half-time.

Turning to National Football League, there are only four more weeks to go until their play-offs begin, but for most fantasy football leagues the post season starts up this weekend.

Not to blow my own horn, but I ended

up with my regular season with a 9-4 record.

I did it by starting my 14th round selection at quarterback most of the year - Brett Favre. (Matt Hasselbeck was the first quarterback I drafted, but everyone knows he's Brett's caddie).

While the real Green Bay Packers have managed to play themselves into mediocrity, my fantasy team, called 'Kasekopff' (German for 'Cheesehead'), has managed to win consistently with Favre at the helm and wide-out Donald Driver on the receiving end of most of his passes this season.

My running backs, usually the strength of any successful fantasy team, stunk, for the most part. My top draft pick, Edgerrin James with the Arizona Cardinals hasn't cracked 700 yards rushing yet, and last weekend he had a whopping four carries! I've benched him in favor of the Giants' goal-line workhorse, Brandon Jacobs.

Willie Parker is my other starting back, and he's been up and down most of the year as the Steelers keep falling behind, giving up on the run as they try to play catch-up football.

He was definitely on an upswing Thursday night, carrying the Steelers past the Browns 27-7 with 32 carries and a Steeler team-record 223 yards!

My worthy opponent in this weekend's opening play-off round is none other than Sgt. Nicole Kojetin, the editor of the 'Crossed Sabers' newspaper, which hits the streets Monday. Her team, the 'Biting Bisons,' (so named for her Montana homeland), finished our season at 5-8 and barely made it into the play-offs.

I hope that Brett Favre has a big weekend. I hope Donald Driver catches two TDs and goes over the century mark. I hope that the Bisons, who rely on the Giants' Eli Manning and Tiki Barber, bite off more than they can chew in Fantasyland this weekend. Then, at least, I'll have something else to write about next weekend.

Go Packers!

